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18 March 1948

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS1100 1102
jlc Subjects Leo Yehuda CHERTOK, with aliases Leo Y. Chertok and
Leo V. Chertok

C/14 1-PL-5

1. Pursuant to your oral request of March 17, 1948 there is attached, for the Director, a memorandum summarizing the reports prepared by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the investigation of the above individuals, together with the results of a review of all OGO traces.

2. Where possible, the pertinent individuals in contact with CHERTOK have been briefly identified for your information and assistance and for the information and assistance of the Director.

William K. Harvey
WILLIAM K. HARVEY
FBI1-
ENCLOSURE

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16 March 1948

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR
COMM-FBI-LAW ENF & LITSubject: Leo Yehuda CHENKOW with aliases Leo J. Chenkow and
Leo V. Chenkow

1. Pursuant to your report there is set forth below a summary of the results of the FBI investigation of CHENKOW, together with the results of a review of all FBI traces concerning him. There has been, the individual mentioned below as being in contact with CHENKOW have been identified briefly for your information.

BACKGROUND

Leo Yehuda CHENKOW was born at Chernovitz, Ukraine on October 9, 1892. He entered the United States in 1912 and resided in New York City almost continuously since that time. His wife, Abby WIMBER, whom he married on January 1, 1927 at New York City, was born in Berlin on May 3, 1902. CHENKOW's father, Joseph, became a naturalized U. S. citizen in Boston, Massachusetts, about 1912 and, consequently, CHENKOW is an American citizen by derivation.

In 1925 CHENKOW filed application with the State Department for a U. S. passport for the purpose of a business trip to England, France, and Russia. His application for this passport was reduced by the State Department on November 23, 1925, at which time the State Department commented that he "is definitely of the pro-Soviet type and first came to the attention of the Department of State around 1925 when his negotiations with the International Cominter in London for extensive concessions in Lithuania were transmitted to the Foreign Office". The State Department also commented at this time that in 1925 CHENKOW made a trip to the Soviet Union and proposed the establishment of a bank in the U. S. with a capital of \$50,000,000 for the purpose of disseminating Soviet insipid paper received in payment for American products shipped to the U. S.

RESULTS OF FBI INVESTIGATION

In October 1942 the FBI instituted an investigation of Leo Yehuda CHENKOW based on information received to the effect that a practice bomb casing had been shipped to him at the Hotel Reform, Mexico, D. F. The titillation of this incident failed to reflect any intelligence of significance, but did reflect that CHENKOW had acquired a wide reputation as an opportunist and promoter and that the bomb casing had been shipped to him in connection with efforts on his part to procure U. S. and Mexican Government contracts.

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FBI - NEW YORK

On November 17, 1942, it was ascertained that CHILTON was a close associate of Edward G. BREWER (Edward G. BREWER). BREWER at this time was reported as being an anti-Nazi German intellectual and that BREWER was reported in 1942 that CHILTON served as a German agent during the Spanish Civil War and was, during the period of that war, in close contact with Communist leaders in France and West Africa.

While it does not appear in the FBI reports on CHILTON, it should be noted that CHILTON has been the subject of an intensive investigation by the FBI, and also in Europe and South America by the U. S. It is noted further that [REDACTED] shortly after the outbreak of World War II, advised [REDACTED] that CHILTON was known [REDACTED] to be an being a Soviet espionage agent. According to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was serving as an agent of both the OGPU (now KGB) and Red Army Intelligence.

Inasmuch as this initial investigation of CHILTON failed to reflect his implication in intelligence activities, the case was closed by the FBI on April 12, 1944.

On May 1, 1946 the FBI investigation of CHILTON was re-opened on the basis of an anonymous letter postmarked March 23, 1946 at New York City, which alleged that CHILTON had made no secret trip to the Soviet Union, had large sums of money but no visible means of support, and had met in 1944 with a number of Russians from Canada. The letter alleged further that on his frequent trips to Mexico CHILTON always visited the Soviet Embassy and that he had been a personal friend of Soviet Ambassador to Mexico City. In addition, the letter stated that CHILTON intended to visit the Soviet Union in the near future and frequently visited the Soviet Consulate in New York, as well as the American Trading Corporation in New York, commanding great respect in both places. It was alleged in the letter that CHILTON had excellent contacts in the Department of State and was a personal friend of one "Carp" of Connecticut. It is interesting to note that considerable information was available prior to CHILTON's death clearly indicating his at least indirect participation in Soviet Intelligence service activity. The "Carp" referred to in the letter is identified as George CARP, who frequently has been reported as a brother-in-law of Lyndon B. JOHNSON, Soviet Foreign Minister, and who is known to have maintained close Soviet connections for many years.

As a result of the re-opening of the investigation of CHILTON, it was ascertained that on June 26, 1945 he wrote to Harry H. HANCOCK, Inc., stating that he had just returned from Europe, having been there on business transactions eight times during the preceding two years. In this letter he offered to represent the HANCOCK COMPANY in negotiations with the USSR and made no claims concerning the value of his Soviet contacts for this purpose.

It was also ascertained upon the re-opening of the investigation that CHILTON was identical with the individual, who on June 12, 1941 reported to the New York office of the FBI that the Carter Trading Corporation, which, it is noted, is the primary Soviet purchasing medium in the U. S. and an official

Soviet agency was the "biggest spy organization in the United States". CHINTON failed to furnish any substantiating details for this statement and his motivation in so reporting to the FBI was never made evident.

It was also ascertained at this time that on March 23, 1946 one ~~CHINTON~~ of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., advised A. K. THOMAS of the Chain Belt Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin to contact the Astor Trading Corporation in New York for information concerning CHINTON, in connection with THOMAS's desire to use CHINTON as a representative in the Soviet Union after World War II.

~~CHINTON~~, Second Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., was of particular interest inasmuch as information exists indicating that he, while was implicated in Soviet Intelligence activities and that late in 1945 he may have replaced First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy Anatoli Baranov, now of WFOB (now WFO) as a resident. You will recall that Baranov was the Soviet agent known as "M" who was responsible for the operation of an extensive Soviet espionage organization centered in agencies of the U. S. Government, the investigation of which by the FBI is commonly known as the Grayson Case.

On March 19, 1946 CHINTON advised CHINTON that General Levvid ~~CHINTON~~, of the Soviet Government Purchasing Commission, would like to travel to the U. S. It is recalled that ~~CHINTON~~, was then Chairman of the Purchasing Commission at that time, was identified by the Soviet defector Vladimir & Fyodorovich KATZ, as an important representative in the U. S. of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

It was subsequently ascertained early in 1946 that Dr. ~~CHINTON~~, attorney and member of the Board of Directors of ~~CHINTON~~ described CHINTON as a middle-aged man who had previously been employed by ~~CHINTON~~. At this time it was learned that CHINTON had been in contact with ~~CHINTON~~, Acting Soviet Consul General in New York. On March 30, 1946 ~~CHINTON~~ was able to go on with Soviet officials concerning his application for a visa to travel to the Soviet Union.

On October 7, 1946 the FBI investigation, Mrs. CHINTON had approached the Central Intelligence Group to request its help for him, and help, to the Soviet Union. The refusal of her application for a passport for this trip is described above in the section entitled "Background". It is interesting to note that on August 7, 1946 CHINTON made a long distance call from New York City to Washington, D. C., phone number National 8-1111, which is listed to the "M" line.

2. Inasmuch as this investigation, according to the FBI, failed to reflect that CHINTON was engaged in Soviet espionage, this case was closed on May 12, 1947.

OCIO TRACCS

A complete review has been made of the CGO files concerning CHINTON. The only pertinent additional information contained therein is that the investigation presently being conducted by CGO of Soviet Espionage, Mrs. CHINTON, referred to above, has substantiated his association with CHINTON.